

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



## Page 1

- I. Healthy Youth Act
- II. Wisconsin Shares Under Review

## Page 2

- I. Estabrook Dam
- II. Committee Work Continues

## Page 3

- I. Free Supper
- II. Intern Spotlight
- III. Digital Books

## Page 4

- I. Community Events
- II. Contact Information

# THROUGH THE LENS



Senator Taylor at the National Association of Insurance Commissioners briefing.

# 4th Senate District LEGISLATIVE UPDATE SENATOR LENA C. TAYLOR

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 28—OCTOBER 02

## Welcome to my Legislative Update!

I'm State Senator Lena C. Taylor and this is my legislative update. If you do not wish to receive my weekly update, please let me know at [sen.taylor@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:sen.taylor@legis.wisconsin.gov).

### -Healthy Youth Act -

On Tuesday, September 29, 2009 I was happy to introduce the Healthy Youth Act alongside Representative Grigsby, Planned Parenthood and other involved individuals. I was so happy to see people out to support an issue that is so important to us.

This piece of legislation ensures that schools who choose to teach sex ed are using curriculum proven to reduce risky behaviors that result in unintended teenage pregnancy and STDs. This bill does not mandate sexuality education, rather it sets forth a guideline the schools will have to follow if they choose to teach sex ed.

At the press conference, I spoke to the importance of our children, that they are our future and we must protect them. I also pointed out the shocking statistics regarding STDs and asked the public to join me in support of the Healthy Youth Act.

### - Joint Finance Addresses Wisconsin Shares Concerns -

This past Tuesday, I joined my colleagues on the Finance Committee for an informational hearing session on the reported fraud and mismanagement of the Wisconsin Shares program. My colleagues and I requested this hearing with Sec. Reggie Bicha to review the allegations of fraud and reported same addresses of sex offenders and child care centers in Milwaukee and Racine. Sec. Bicha appeared before the committee to answer questions and offer insight to the committee.

The reports of fraud and mismanagement are disturbing and shocking. For far too long, in fact since its inception has the program been poorly run. Wisconsin created the Wisconsin Shares program because it realized it could not do welfare reform without providing child care services for the mothers who were on the program. But, Wisconsin has never done it right.

That said, there are serious concerns about the current problems in the program. Blame can be laid at the feet of the state and in Milwaukee County. Milwaukee's leadership has not managed the program well for years and the State has clearly not managed the contracts well enough. The finance, audit, and judiciary committees shall continue to investigate provide oversight to the program.



# MANNERS MOMENT



**Dana World-Patterson**  
Visions Etiquette Training  
visionsetiquettetraining.com

Do you have a niche for small talk or are you uncomfortable striking up a conversation with strangers? Help is here! You want them to talk about themselves. Begin by asking open ended questions that require more than yes or no responses. Be prepared to talk about a few current news stories. Maintain lightheartedness, thank them and move to the

# FROM THE BAR

## TORT REFORM

A change or alteration of laws imposing civil liability for torts especially to limit liability for punitive damages

(Tort Reform is a common political term calling for changes in the law to protect liability concerns of Corporate America)

## - Estabrook Dam Debates Flows On In “Open Gates” -



The debate continues to rage around the Estabrook Dam — whether the dam should be replaced, removed, or some yet unknown outcome. I have had the pleasure of meeting with the local citizens, county officials, and DNR officials about the dam. Thursday, we had a five hour meeting that extended into a tour of the dam site that concentrated on the flood control value of the dam and the pressing

PCB issue of the exposed soil.

Estabrook Dam is one of the focal points of Estabrook Park which borders my district and Sen. Alberta Darling (R-River Hills). The dam was built in the 1930’s to provide flood control for the area which experienced flooding during the heavy runs in the spring. My family remembers some of those water levels getting high all the way over to the Rufus King Neighborhood. The picture above shows the dam and the picture to the right shows the “dragon’s teeth” that are installed to prevent debris from reaching the dam.

PCB’s and debris contaminate the site now that the dam is at “open gate”. My office, the DNR, and the County will be in continued negotiation on the dam and it’s future.



## - Housing Legislation Moves Forward in Senate -

Major housing legislation is moving forward in the Senate. My bill, SB 255 — The Mortgage Mediation Act is scheduled for a public hearing on Wednesday at the Capitol. The Mortgage Mediation Act is a big bill that requires mediation be offered prior to a foreclosure commencing. This type of “alternative dispute resolution” is proven effective at keeping people in their homes, shortening the time between foreclosure and sale if that need happens, and keeping communication open between all parties.



I have also introduced two bills that are presented by the Assembly Speaker’s Taskforce on Preventing Home Foreclosure. One will require education on financial literacy and mortgages in schools. The other will require regulation and licensing of mortgage brokers. This industry has long been identified as one of the leading reasons for the foreclosure crisis we face. Both bills will be moving forward very soon in the legislature.



## HEALTH CORNER



*A few health tips to help you live smarter and feel better.*

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR COLD WEATHER?

Cold weather is coming upon us quickly and you should be prepared. Make sure you stay warm, if you get sick stay home, rest, drink lots of fluids and if you have H1N1 make sure you see a doctor. Eat healthy, live healthy and you will be healthy.

## WORD OF THE WEEK

*We must learn to regard people less in light of what they do or omit to do, and more in the light of what they suffer.*

-- Dietrich Bonhoeffer

## -Free Supper Programs for Children Expands -

Milwaukee public schools are expanding free meal programs for children from low-income families.

While there have been free breakfast and lunch programs for poor children, serving free supper at the end of the day is new. The free supper program has more than doubled with a grant of \$225,000 from Kohl's Department Stores and in partnership with the Hunger Task Force and Milwaukee Public Schools. In addition to offering free suppers to needy children, the money will also be used in purchasing kitchen equipments such as la carte vending machines to better prepare the meals.

The Hunger Task Force plans to work on changing eligibility rules that currently prohibit children at the age of 13 and older from participating in the free meal programs. Sherrie Tussler, executive director of the Hunger Task Force, said there is a great need for the expansion of such programs in Milwaukee. About one in four children in Milwaukee lives in poverty.



## -Intern Spotlight -

This is Cate Heath. I'm in the first semester interning in State Senator Taylor's office. I am currently in the second year of law school at the University of Wisconsin. I previously attended Taylor University, earning a B.A. in International Business. During high school I participated in student congress through forensics with Sheboygan North High and became very interested in politics and the legislative process, which led me here!

This first month at Senator Taylor's office has been full of learning and I have enjoyed helping constituents and others that have contacted the office! I am very thankful for this great opportunity!

## - Digital Books Arising as New Alternative for UW -

Across UW campuses, a new initiative is under way to expand electronic textbook programs. With economic downturn, students are seeking various ways to save their money and pursue their educational goals at the same time. These days, paper and ink textbooks seem to be becoming old-fashioned and finite, because of their weight and cost.

After some tryouts with Amazon's Kindle, an electronic reader, most of the students have displayed positive feedbacks on studying with the electronic textbooks. Gabrielle Zucker, a spokeswoman of CourstSmart, said e-textbooks are sold at an average of 50% less than print texts.

Not only can they be cost effective in the long run, some pointed that the gadget also keeps them from getting distracted from the Internet. These energy-efficient devices can further save the environment by reducing the need for printing on campus. As part of the university's \$10,000 pilot program, UW seeks to examine the possibility of going paperless, saving money and maximizing collaborative learning.

# Team Taylor



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**WE ARE HERE TO  
SERVE!**

**CALL ON US AS  
YOU NEED!**

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# Community Events

**What:** Oktoberfest  
**When:** Saturday, October 03  
11:00am—7:30pm

**Where:** Grace Center  
250 E. Juneau Avenue

**Info:** German entertainment, German  
food, polka dancing. Food and  
beverages will be available for purchase

Admission is FREE!

**What:** 4th Annual Fatherhood  
Summit

**When:** October 9-10

**Where:** St. Marcus Lutheran  
church, 2215 N. Palmer

**Info:** Registration Info  
414-286-5653  
[www.milwaukeefatherhood.com](http://www.milwaukeefatherhood.com)

If an organization you belong to has an event you feel should be included in the Community Events section please [e-mail](mailto:eric.peterson@legis.wisconsin.gov) me.

Do you have a computer? **Do you need help with food, prescriptions, or other services?** Use [www.access.wi.gov](http://www.access.wi.gov) to see if you and your family are eligible for a variety of state-sponsored services designed to assist citizens in procuring essential resources.

## Useful Resources

**Child Support Enforcement**  
414-278-5160

**Elder link**  
414-289-6874

**Governor Doyle**  
414-227-4344

**Employment Ways to Work  
Program**  
414-906-2820

**Senior Care Insurance**  
1-800-657-208

**Senior Law**  
(414) 278-1222  
(414) 278-7722

**Energy Assistance**  
414-906-2800

**Rent Assistance**  
414-286-5678

**Coalition of Wisconsin Aging  
Groups Prescription Drug  
Assistance**  
1-866-456-8211

**Food Assistance**  
414-733-0211

**Bureau of Child Welfare**  
414-220-SAFE

**City of Wauwatosa**  
414-479-8900

**GED Program**  
414-264-6888

**W-2**  
1-800-722-2295

**Milwaukee Common Council**  
414-286-2221

**City of Glendale**  
414-228-1700

**Badger Care Insurance**  
1-800-362-3002

**US Congresswoman  
Gwen Moore**  
414-297-1140

**SENATE CONTACTS  
Sergeant-at-Arms Office**  
608-266-1801

**Milwaukee County Economic  
Support**  
414-289-6000

**US Senator Russ Feingold**  
414-276-7282

**Human Resources**  
608-264-8471

**Wisconsin Foreclosure Hotline**  
414-278-1240

**US Senator Herb Kohl**  
414-297-4451

**Senate Chief Clerk's Office**  
608-266-2517

**Medicaid**  
1-800-291-2002